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ABSTRACT

Articulation for Career Education (ACE) is a project designed by the Department of Career Education to continue and expand the Articulated School-Based Management Plan (ASBMP) begun in 1981. A total sum of $57,966 in Education Consolidation Improvement Act (ECIA) Chapter II funds were granted for the first year of this proposed 24 month project of the Dade County Florida Public Schools. An evaluation of the ACE project was undertaken to verify that the schools currently included in ASBMP were monitored, and to observe and document the process of induction of new schools into the program. Personnel from the Department of Career Education were interviewed and their records examined. It was recommended that the Department of Career Education (DCE) indicate a minimum acceptable level of supervision, or monitoring, for the regular ASBMP program, in terms of a measureable criterion. Should the DCE determine that the designated minimum level of supervision of the regular program cannot be maintained with the present level of resources, while the remaining schools are being inducted into ASBMP, it was recommended that any requests for additional funding to increase temporary monitoring capabilities be favorably regarded. (Author/DWH)

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EVALUATION OF THE 1983-84 ECIA, CHAPTER II ARTICULATION FOR CAREER EDUCATION PROJECT

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Office of Educational Accountability
November, 1984

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Executive Summary

Articulation for Career Education, or ACE, is a project designed by the Department of Career Education to continue and expand the Articulated School-Based Management Plan (ASBMP), a program begun in 1981. A total sum of $57,966 in Chapter II funds was granted for the first year of this proposed 24 month project.

An evaluation of the ACE project was undertaken to verify that the schools currently included in ASBMP were monitored, and to observe and document the process of induction of new schools into the program. Personnel from the Department of Career Education were interviewed and their records examined. The following recommendations are made.

1. It is recommended that the Department of Career Education indicate a minimum acceptable level of supervision or monitoring for the regular ASBMP program (where regular is understood to refer to the schools already fully integrated into the program), in terms of some measurable criterion, such as visitations or visitation hours.

2. Should the Department of Career Education determine that the designated minimum level of supervision of the regular program cannot be maintained with the present level of resources, while the remaining schools are being inducted into ASBMP, it is recommended that any requests for additional funding to increase temporary monitoring capabilities be favorably regarded.

Background

The Articulated School-Based Management Plan

Career Education is not a delineated school subject to be taught in discrete classes. It is rather a general perspective, to be infused into the general curriculum, such that individual students may learn to use the skills and knowledge they acquire in the making of career decisions. The Articulated School-Based Management Plan (ASBMP) for career education is a strategy for the design and implementation of career education programs that will achieve this result.

The basis of the ASBMP strategy is that - within specified guidelines - each school designs its own career education plan, tailored to its own unique needs and the capabilities of its staff. Once a school-based plan has been developed and approved, the participating school is assisted with inservice, visitations, and as much support as available materials and resources permit.

Beginning in 1981, schools have been inducted into this process in groups, by feeder pattern, at the rate of four feeder patterns a year. The schools inducted into the program in a given year are collectively referred to as a "phase"; thus phase 1 refers to the 34 schools which became ASBMP schools in the 1980-81 school year. At the start of the 1983-84 year, three phases had been completed, and a total of 92 schools had developed school-based plans under the supervision of the Department of Career Education (DCE).

Funding for ASBMP through the Career Education Incentive Act was discontinued after the 1982-83 year. Chapter II funds were sought as a replacement; to continue and extend the program, and to create a new staff position (for an educational specialist) to carry out these duties.

The project proposed to achieve these aims was called "Articulation for Career Education", or ACE. The project duration was to be 24 months, and a sum of $62,745 was requested for the first year. A total of $57,966 was granted.

Description of the ACE Project: 1983-84

A new DCE staff member, termed the "Educational Specialist for the Coordination of the Articulated School-Based Management Plan" (hereafter referred to as the ASBMP Educational Specialist, or simply E.S.) assumed his duties in September, 1983. A list of his primary responsibilities is attached as Appendix A.

Supervision of the Most Recent Phase. Item number 2 on the list of primary responsibilities for the new ASBMP Educational Specialist states that he will work "with the area offices and schools in the continuing development, refinement, and implementation of the Articulated School-Based Management Plan".

In the Spring of 1983, twenty-nine new schools were inducted into the ASBMP program. This was phase 3. One of the first duties of the new Educational Specialist, in September of 1983, was to provide an orientation for this group of schools. A leadership workshop was held for these schools, given in separate sessions for each Area.

As one function of this workshop, the E.S. went over these schools' plans, critiquing them and ascertaining that necessary changes were recognized. As a

result, every phase 3 school submitted an updated 1983-84 plan to the DCE. [Such an update was requested of every participating school, and will be referred to as the 1983-84 Update, to distinguish it from the 1984-85 Update, which indicates that a school has submitted a plan revision intended to be reviewed for use in the 1984-85 school year.]

Item 11 of the list of responsibilities requires the E.S. to make "visits to all school sites on a regular basis". Visits for the express purpose of monitoring the ASBMP program are recorded on a visitation form, which contains information on time spent, activities, recommendations, and follow-up (a copy of the form is included as Appendix B). A complete record of these visits is maintained by the Educational Specialist. All references to visits and visitations in this report are to these formally reported visits and to no others.

All the phase 3 schools were visited at least once, most twice, and a few three times. Nearly all visits to the schools of this phase were by the E.S. (i.e., they were not delegated to other personnel), and they were given more time, on the average, than schools from the earlier phases, a point that will come up again later.

Induction of the Schools of the Next Phase. Thirty-seven new schools were brought into the ASBMP program in 1984, as phase 4. Following a meeting with the Educational Specialist in February, the schools' principals began submitting forms naming their committees. From these the attendance for the Two-Day Conference was determined. In the course of the Conference (held in April), the attending representatives of each phase 4 school produced a rough draft of an ASBMP plan. By the end of the school year, formal plans were on file in the DCE from every school in the phase. Each was accompanied by a review form completed by the E.S., in preparation for a critical review in the Fall.

The enumeration of the Education Specialist's primary responsibilities (item 3) requires that he "oversee the coordination of the two-day conference for school-based teams held annually". As an indication of the time, effort, and attention required of the E.S. for this activity, no visitations at all were conducted from January 13 through April 18.*

Monitoring and Supervising the Program. In addition to items 2 and 11 (quoted earlier) of the list of primary responsibilities for the Educational Specialist, another (number 1) is directly pertinent to the monitoring of the program: "Monitors the Articulated School-Based Management Plan in [all] feeder patterns..." The chief means of carrying out this monitoring function was the visitation.

A total of 163 visitations were carried out in the 1983-84 school year (including 15 for which no time data were available). Of the 92 schools in the ASBMP program, 3 were not visited, 27 received one visit, 51 received two visits, 10 were visited three times, and 1 was visited four times. About 60 percent of the total visits were first visits, only about seven percent third. A summary is given in Table 1.

*That is, no formal visitation reports were found in the file for this period. There were visits for a variety of other purposes, such as truck days and career fairs. The Career Fair, held in March, also required an investment of time, and caused the conference - originally planned for March - to be postponed until April.

Overall, the average length of a visit was just over an hour (63 minutes), with a standard deviation (s.d.) of 35 minutes. All told, the visitations required about 170 hours of effort (adding in the 15 "untimed" visits at the average of 1:03), not counting transportation time.

Table 1

VISITATIONS TO ASBMP SCHOOLS:
NUMBER, TOTAL TIME, AND AVERAGE DURATION OF VISIT*

	Visits			
	first	second	third	combined
Average time (minutes)	65	62	61	63
Standard dev. (minutes)	35	30	18	35
Number visits	87	50	11	148
Total time (hours)	94.8	51.4	11.2	154.3

*Duration of visit could not be determined for 15 of the visitations recorded in the log. These visitations were omitted from the computations. Average time and standard deviations are rounded to the nearest minute.

SOURCE: Department of Career Education, Dade County Public Schools.

As pointed out earlier, the visitations also vary by phase. Consider Table 2, where the information on visitations is used in comparing phases 1 and 2 (the "ongoing" program) with phase 3 (the most recently added schools).

Phase 3 schools required more time and attention. In time per visit, the phase 3 schools required on the average eight minutes longer than schools of the earlier phases. There are 34 phase 3 schools, 32% of the 1983-84 total of 92 ASBMP schools. At 61 visits in 163, phase 3 accounts for 37% of the visits, and at 58.8 hours, 38% of the visitation time.

Seventeen percent of the visitations were made by persons other than the Educational Specialist. Almost all of these delegated visitations were to the schools of phases 1 and 2. As a result, 42% of the E.S.'s visits were to phase 3 schools, accounting for some 43% of his visitation time.

Table 2

VISITATIONS TO ASBMP SCHOOLS, BY PHASE:
NUMBER, TOTAL TIME, AND AVERAGE DURATION OF VISIT

	Visits	
	phases 1 & 2	phase 3
Average time (minutes)	60	68
Standard dev. (minutes)	33	39
Number visits*	102	61
Total time (hours)**	95.5	58.8

*Includes visits for which duration-of-visit data is not known.
**Based on the 148 visits for which duration is known.

SOURCE: Department of Career Education, Dade County Public Schools.

The Educational Specialist made visitations on 49 of the 190 days of the school year, averaging 2.73 visits per day. Approximately half of the visits were made at the pace of one or two a day, but a standard deviation of .49 indicates some variation. On some occasions the E.S. made as many as 5 or 6 visits a day. The greatest number of visits occurred in October, early November, early January, late April, and May. For a three month period following January 13, no visitations at all were recorded. They were resumed in mid-April, after the two-day conference. It was at this time that the ASBMP Educational Specialist sought and received assistance with the visitations.

Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to verify that the currently included schools were monitored and their career education activities coordinated, and to observe and document the progress of the new schools in the preparation of school-based plans. To this end, personnel from the Department of Career Education were interviewed and their records examined.

The evaluation covers the first year (1983-84) of a multi-year project. Data collection was arbitrarily terminated as of June 30, 1984. No information after that date was considered.

It is not clear from the proposal what difference there is, if any, between the ACE project and the ASBMP program. As the proposal states (page 5): "The Articulated School-Based Management Plan involves two distinct phases: a preliminary two-day conference....and the monitoring from the central office." This appears to be essentially what the ACE project is intended to do, and it is within this context that the creation of the Educational Specialist position was proposed.

From this perspective, the contents of the proposal were converted to objectives capable of evaluation: 1) bring the new schools inducted last year into full participation in the program; 2) implement ASBMP in the schools of an additional four feeder patterns; 3) provide monitoring and supervision for the "ongoing program" of already participating schools.

In evaluating the project, these three objectives were considered. The first, the initiation of the newest group of schools (phase 3) into the program, was evaluated as successfully completed, the indicator being the 100 percent current update of their plans.

The second, induction of an additional four feeder patterns (phase 4), was also evaluated as successfully completed, the indicator again the 100 percent of completed plans (which may also be viewed as being 1984-85 "updates").

The third posed a problem of criteria. Since the plan, or the plan update, is the central product of the program, and since the core concept of monitoring or coordinating the program is through the manipulation of the school-based plans, it is also reasonable to employ it as an indicator for this third aspect. But was it reasonable to expect a 100 percent return of revised plans?

Ideally, in a program operating at peak efficiency, every school would file a plan update for the coming year prior to the end of the current year. However, while it is clear that a 100 percent return of current plans or proposed plans is a necessary criterion for judging the completion of the first two aspects successful, applying that criterion to the third is not reasonable.

The reason is that ASBMP is - by design - a decentralized program of career education that maximizes local initiative and control. Thus, although central authority is sufficient to lead schools through the production and initial revision of their school-based plan, any further central attempt at supervision must rely on request and persuasion.

Because of the voluntary nature of the program, visibility and personal contact are key factors of coordination, and the visitation is a primary tool for monitoring. The idea that the effective monitoring of the ASBMP program depends upon the visitation is clearly an important concept in the DCE. The list of primary responsibilities for the ASBMP Educational Specialist requires visits to all school sites "on a regular basis". The project proposal is more specific, specifying a minimum of two visits a year to each school ("at least once each semester"). The E.S., after a year's experience monitoring the program, expressed the opinion that the visitation frequency should be three per year per school, and further estimated that the average time per visit needed to "service" an ASBMP school ranged from one to one-and-a-half hours.

How much of a relationship is there between visitations and the number of updates on file? The phase 1 and 2 schools (the "ongoing program" for 1983-84) were requested to file two updates, one to make their plans current, and one in preparation for the coming year. Table 3 shows the relation between updates filed and the number of visits that a school received. The expected relationship prevails. The tendency for more visits to increase the likelihood that updates will be filed is clear. Kendall's tau-c for the table is .859. (Tau-c ranges from 0 for no relationship to 1 for a perfect association).

Table 3

PLAN UPDATES ON FILE AS A FUNCTION OF
THE NUMBER OF SITE VISITS: PHASES 1 AND 2

Number of Plan Updates	Number of Visits			
	none	one	two	three
none	3	2	3	
one		13	17	1
two		8	13	3

Source: Compiled from data furnished by the Department of Career Education.

The relationship is also evident when the updates are viewed as a function of visitation time. Schools of all three phases were asked to file updates for the coming 1984-85 year. Their responses, as a percent of their phase total, are as follows: phase 1 - 35 percent; phase 2 - 45 percent; and phase 3 - 48 percent. The percent of visitation hours by phase, for the Educational Specialist only, are 26.4 percent, 30.9 percent, and 42.7 percent, respectively. The more time spent visiting the schools in a phase, the greater the percentage of returns from that phase. It is worth noting also that these figures are for the E.S. alone. When the hours for the assisting personnel are added in, the relationship is much less obvious. Apparently, the E.S.'s identity as official ASBMP representative adds to his powers of persuasion.

About one-half of the ASBMP schools received second visits in 1983-84, short of the twice yearly schedule specified in the proposal, and far short of the three recommended by the ASBMP Educational Specialist. Observations of the Educational Specialist's activities suggest that with a 92 school regular program he is overextended. Assistance was required even to achieve the number of visitations attained. Since there were not enough resources available to the project to achieve all the objectives, the third objective was sacrificed to the other two. More visitation time was given to the other two. More visitation time was given to the phase 3 schools. All visits ceased while the conference was planned and held, and while the new schools were inducted.

As of June 30, 1984, the results were these. Eighty-eight percent of the phase 1 schools and 83 percent of the phase 2 schools filed 1983-84 Updates. Thirty-five and 45 percent, respectively, filed 1984-85 Updates. Forty-eight percent of the phase 3 schools filed a 1984-85 Update.* How satisfactory this is as a supervision of the ASBMP program must be judged in the DCE. It is regarded as a successful completion of the third objective because it is found to represent the maximum use of available resources.

Discussion and Recommendations

Within the above context, Project ACE was found to have been successfully completed for the year 1983-84. There are often difficulties, however, when objectives have to be inferred, and/or operational measurements assigned. In this case, the difficulty lies in using maximum effort to decide acceptability. There would be some question about this even if the program were not expected to change from year to year, and ASBMP is still being expanded.

It should be obvious by this point that the ASBMP program presently consists of two rather distinct parts, one temporary and the other permanent. The temporary part consists of the induction of new schools into the program, and the careful supervision of those schools through their first year in ASBMP. An implicit assumption of this evaluation has been that the activities associated with this part of the program are regarded as inflexible, to be performed without fail. The time and resources must be available to do them.

The permanent part of the program consists of the monitoring and supervision of those schools that have been in the program more than one year. A second implicit assumption has been that the activities associated with this part are flexible, capable of being postponed or omitted. Schools which already have plans in operation will get through the year, with or without being monitored. Visitations can be waived if necessary.

These assumptions were inferred from observation of the project, where monitoring the permanent program was sacrificed to the induction and guidance of the newer schools, under conditions where resources were not adequate for all.

*These percentages continued to improve after the end of the academic year. See the DCE memorandum of August 10, 1984, in which the Educational Specialist reports more recent figures.

Because limited resources force such choices, it is important for the DCE to indicate some minimum acceptability level to be maintained for the program to be regarded as adequately supervised, or monitored. [Such a criterion - the two visit minimum - appears to exist in the present proposal, although it is not identified as such.] From this follows a recommendation.

1. It is recommended that the Department of Career Education indicate a minimum acceptable level of supervision or monitoring for the regular ASBMP program (where regular is understood to refer to the schools already fully integrated into the program), in terms of some measurable criterion, such as visitations or visitation hours.

Such an indication is particularly important given that - assuming that the Department's resources will remain constant - the increasing size of the regular program will make adequate monitoring increasingly difficult. Progressively more time will be required just to maintain the current visitation level, since about thirty new schools are being added each year. The implication of the update-visitation relationship noted above is that if visitations per school cannot be maintained at the present level, the update return must be expected to fall below the present percentage. This observation leads to a second recommendation.

2. Should the Department of Career Education determine that the designated minimum level of supervision of the regular program cannot be maintained with the present level of resources, while the remaining schools are being inducted into ASBMP, it is recommended that any requests for additional funding to increase temporary monitoring capabilities be favorably regarded.

Appendix A

Educational Specialist's Job Description

Educational Specialist for the Coordination of the Articulated School-Based Management Plan

Budget - Program 4181
Source of Funding: Chapter II

The primary responsibilities of this educational specialist are as follows:

1. Monitors the Articulated School-Based Management Plan (ASBMP) in the sixteen feeder patterns (1981-82, 1982-83, 1983-84, 1984-85,) and four additional feeder patterns (Phase V, 1985-86)

2. Works with the area offices and schools in the continuing development, refinement and implementation of the Articulated School-Based Management Plan.

3. Oversees the coordination of the two-day conference for school-based teams held annually.

4. Coordinates all curriculum development efforts including but not limited to elementary career awareness, career-related secondary curriculum, and employability skills materials.

5. Manages project budget.

6. Completes all project reports.

7. Oversees and coordinates printing of curriculum materials developed.

8. Supervises all staff development activities designed to train public and non-public school representatives how to utilize career education curriculum materials.

9. Coordinates and supervises the field testing of the materials developed.

10. Coordinates dissemination of information concerning status of the project.

11. Makes visits to all school sites on a regular basis.

Appendix B
Visitation Form

VISITATION FORM

All Schools

Elementary and Secondary

SCHOOL _____

DATE _____ TIME IN _____ / TIME OUT _____

SIGNATURE - Office Personnel / Principal _____

Activities: _____

Recommendations Made: _____

Follow-Up to be done: _____

FORM COMPLETED BY: (Career Ed. Staff Member) _____

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